¶ Aplaine

ſubuerſyon or tur-

nyng vp ſyde down of all the argu
mentes, that the Popecatholykes
can make for the maintenaunce of
auricular confeſſion, with a moſte
wholſome doctryne touchyng the
due obedience, that we owe vn-
to ciuill magiſtrates, made
dialogue wyſe betwene the
Prentyſe and the Prieſt
by Gracyous
Menewe.

¶ Pſalme. 31.

¶ I ſayd, I will confeſſe my ſinès
vnto the Lorde: and ſo thou for-
gaueſte the wickedneſſe of
my people.

To all faythfull brethren/ that loue Jesu Chryste sincerelye, Gracious Menewe wysheth grace and peace of conscience, and Godly strength from God the father throughe oure Lord Jesu Chryst.

Many in these moste perylous tymes, whych haue deseruingly chaunced vnto vs for our synnes, are in such perplexite and trouble of conscience, that they can not tel, which waye to turne thẽselfes, whom to helpe and succoure, accordyng to the lyttell talent that God

hath lent me, I haue thought to be my bounden duty. And truelye I would haue long agone discharged my conscience in thys parte, If I myght by any meanes haue conueniently publisshed and sette forth abroade those thynges, that I had prepared for the purpose. But that could not bee, why che thynge was to me no lesse greuous, than if I my selfe had felte the same burdē and payne, that I saw e my poore brethren to fele: howbeit sith, accordyng to the commen prouerbe, it is better late then neuer: I haue now at thys present penned or written out a litle treatyse, wherin I show briefly out of Gods boke and such auncyent wryters, as ground their sayinges vpon the same, how farre forth we oughte to bee obedyente vnto ciuill magistrates. And thys I dyd because many are of this opinion, that they are bounde to do what

What is cō tayned in thys boke.

whatsoeuer the higher powers cō
maunde them, though their lawes
were directlye agaynste God and
his word, in so much that they per-
suade them selues that they shalbe
excused by them in the dreadful dai
of iudgemente, when we shall ap-
peare all before god, if at anye
tyme they commit manifest Idola
trye and playne vngodlynesse
throughe theyr commaundement.
Whom I desyer in the bowels of
our sauiour Jesu Christ, who hath
shedde his blood indifferently for
all them, that heare his worde o-
bedyently, and wythout any feare
what man can doe vnto them, stike
and cleaue stedfastly vnto it: that
they wyll dyligently and wythout
affectyon, puttyng asyde all vayne
loue of their selues, looke vpon the
places and examples of the holye
scripture, and vpon the autorites
of the olde auncyente fathers, that

What mo-
ued me to
wryte here
of the obe-
diēce due
to magi-
strates.

I haue here alleaged in thys my ſmall boke, truly aunſwerynge all maner of obiectyons that ar made to the contrary, then I truſte, they wil be better aduiſed, and ceaſſe to pleaſe themſelues in that which is euil, or to iuſtifie their manifeſt diſobedyence towardes God and hys woorde, vnder the pretence and colour of the obedyence that we owe vnto hys magiſtrates and rulers of the earth: whom in the ſcriptures we are ſtreightlye com-
Roma. 13. maunded to obeye, yea vpō paine
1. Peter. 2. of damnacyon. But in the meane ſeaſon, we muſte alwayes haue before our eyen the golden ſētence of our ſauiour Chryſte, where he ſayeth: pay that vnto Ceaſar, that
Math. 22. is due vnto Ceaſar, and paye that vnto God, that is due vnto God. If Ceaſar, that is to ſay, the ciuill magiſtrates commaunde the no-

thyng

thyng that God hath forbydde, or forbydde thee nothynge that God hath commaunded, if thou doeste not then obeye, yea thoghe it were to the ieopardye of losinge both lyfe and goodes, thou mayst be sure that the vengeaunce of god and euerlastynge damnacyon of hell hangeth ouer thy head: but if the magistrates forgettyng theyr duetye towardes GOD, from whom they haue receaued all autoryte and power, doce take vpon them, to commaund thee ani thing that GOD hath forbydden, or to forbydde thee any thynge, that the lyrgheste Monarche of all hath commaunded: thou oughtest in no wyse to obeye, not that thou shouldeste make any resystaunce, whyche thynge GODDES worde teacheth thee not, but that thou shouldest rather w Sidrach,

Dani.3.6. Misach and Abednago and wyth the holy prophete Daniel offer thy selfe to dye a most shamefull and cruel death, than in any wyse to be obedyent to theyr vngodly lawes, & wycked constitutiõs or statutes. This thou mayest learne, with dili gent and affectuouslesse readynge in this boke, wherin also thou shalt haue a moste necessary doctryne of confession, teachyng thee how au= ricular confession, whiche nowe a dayes to the great hynderaunce of Goddes trueth, and defacynge of hys glory, is set vp agayne, hath no grounde at al nor foundacyon in Goddes woorde, but is a mere tradition of that Antichryste of Rome, beeyng now, besydes al o= ther enormites, that bee conteined in it, made a snare to snarle & catche men wyth all.

Auriculare confessyon hath no groũde nor foundaciõ in goddes worde.

Here are all the argumentes, & the Popecatholykes can make for the

the maintenaunce of thys Anti-
christian tradycyon, cleane subuer
ted and turned vp side down, with
the mightye thunder boltes of
Goddes word, and with ỹ strong
batteryng peces of the holye fa-
thers of the true catholike church,
and spouse of oure sauyoure Jesu
Christ.

And then, immediatlye after,
it is declared, what maner of con-
fessyon God doeth requyre of vs
in his most sacred worde and holy
scripture.

Thys small laboure of myne,
I desyre all true faythfull Chry-
styans, to take in good worth,
and to praye wyth me instaunt-
lye, that God of hys infinite good
nesse and mercye voucheſafe to
strengthen them, that doe stande,
and to coumforte and helpe the
weake hearted, to rayse them vp
that fal, and finally to beate down

Sathan

Sathan vnder oure fete. Whiche thyng, doubteleſſe, he wyll doe for hys ſonne Jeſu Chryſtes ſake, to whom wyth the father, and the holy goſte, bee al praiſe, glorye and honoure, for euer and euer. So be it.

¶ A moste wholsome talke & communication betwixt the prentyse and the Prieſt, touchyng the matter of auricular confeſſyon: wherein all the argumentes, that ỹ Popecatholykes can make, for ỹ mayntenaũce of this Antichriſtiã tradiciõ, ar ouerthrowẽ and quite turned vpſide down, made by Gracyous Menew.

PRieſt. I am glad that I haue met you nowe in ſo good a tyme, yonge man: for I haue ſome what to ſaye tõ you. Prentyſe. What haue ye to ſaye to me maſter perſõ: here I am ready to heare whatſoeuer ye

wyll

wyll say. Priest, How chaunce that ye are so disobedient at thys time, to ỹ Quenes proceadynges? Dooe ye not knowe, that the scripture bid deth vs to obey ỹ higher powers? And hath not the Quenes maiestye, wyth her moste honorable counsayl, sent a commission and a most streight iniunction, that al generally, that are in the yeares of discretion, shoulde come to shrifte or auricular confession? Howe doeth it chaunce then, that ye are so vnwyllyng to come and to fulfyl her graces commaundment? Prentise. I knowe right wel master person, that we are bidden in the scripturs and worde of God to be obedyent to the magistrates and hygher powers.

Of the obedyence due to the cauill magistrates.

Rom. 13. For S. Paull sayeth: let euery soule submitte her selfe to the auctorite of the higher powers. And

Titus. 3. in an other place, warne thē, saieth he

he, that they submitte thẽselues to rule and power, to obei ỹ officers.
Priest. The better ye knowe youre duty towardes the hygher powers and magistrates, the greater muste be your condemnacyon because ye doe it not.

For the seruaunt, that knoweth hys masters wyl, and doeth it not, Luke. 12.
shalbe beaten with many strypes. Here ye thys yonge man? Doe ye not also reade in the place, that ye haue alleaged, that thei that resist Roma. 13.
the magistrates, whych are the ordeynaunce of God, shall receaue to themselues damnation? Prentyse. All that ye haue sayd is true. But what doth it make for our purpose? For where the scryptures & worde of God doeth bydde vs to obeye the hygher powers and magistrates, it is not to be vnderstãded of those thynges, that pertein to the conscience of manne, whych

ought

ought onli and ſoleli to be builded vpon the infallyble worde of god, in matters belongyng to ſaluacyon, but of ciuill cõſtitutiõs, lawes and ordeynaunces, that temporall rulers, gouernours, & magiſtrates make for the preſeruacyon of the commen weale, wherevnto doubtleſſe we ought to be obedyente, as long as they commaunde nothyng that is vngodlye, or forbydde nothyng, that God hath cõmaunded vs to doe.

How farre furth we ought to be obedient to ciuil magiſtrates.

Prieſt. Why doth not S. Peter ſaye: ſubmitte youre ſelues to all maner ordeynaunce of man, for the Lordes ſake: Here the bleſſed Apoſtel S. Peter doeth bydde vs to be obedyente to all maner of ordeinaunce of man, wythoute any exception.

1. Peter. 2.

Whatſoeuer than they cõmaunde and ordayne, we are bounde to obeye

beye it, layinge aſyde all curiouſe queſtioning. For it is neither mete nor conuenīente, that ſubiectes ſhoulde buſye themſelues aboute Princes matters, aſking, why haue they ordayned thys? Or why haue they ordayned that?

We oughte, wythoute any ſuch buſye aſkynge or queſtionynge, to be obedyente, whatſoeuer thei cō-maunde vs.

If their lawes and ſtatutes be vngodly, they theyr ſelues ſhal anſwere for it, and not we. Our blood ſhall be required at their handes, if they ſette forth any thynge contrary to Gods worde.

In the meane ceaſon we, that be ſubiectes, are bounde to obeye thē. Prentyſe. As touchynge the text, that ye haue alleaged oute of the fyrſte Epyſtell of Saint Peter,

it oughte otherwyse to bee vnder-
ſtanded, than ye doe expounde it.
Els had the bleſſed Apoſtel him-
ſelfe done contrarye to hys owne
ſaying: for when the rulers and el-
Actes.4. ders of Hieruſalem, wyth Annas
the chiefe Prieſt, had commaunded
him and John, that in no wiſe thei
ſhould ſpeake or teache in the name
of Jeſu, they would in no wiſe o-
beye, but rather aunſwered them
ſtoutelye, ſayinge: whether it bee
ryght in the ſight of God, to obey
you more than God, iudge ye. And
in an other place, he wyth the o-
ther Apoſtles ſayth plainly thus:
Actes.5. better it is to obeye God than mā.
Wherfore maſter perſon, we muſt
neceſſarely note here, that there be
.2. kynds of ordeinaunces of man.
Two kides of ordey-naunces of man. The one aperteining to relygyon:
and thoſe, wythout goddes holye
worde, ar altogether vngodly, and
in no wyſe to be folowed. For thei

bydde

bidde vs to worshype God, after mans fancyes and wycked inuēcyons of worldly wysdome, and not as he himselfe wylbe worshypped and serued. Therfore they, that folowe them, shall iustlye heare thys sharpe rebuke of the heauenly wisdome of god: this people draweth nye vnto me wyth theyr mouthes, and honoreth me wyth their lips. Howe beit their hartes are farre from me, teachyng doctrynes, that are but mens preceptes. Yea the lord threatneth his people, because they feared hym throughe mens lawes and doctrynes, that he wold destroie the wisdom of their wise, and that the vnderstandynge of theyr learned men should perishe. And not wythoute a good cause doeth the Lorde threaten, that he wyll doe thus: for sithens thei doe preferre their own wisedom before the wysedome of God, doe they

Math.15.

Esaie.29.

not well deserue (I praye you) to haue that wisdome, whiche God had geuen them for to bestowe to hys own glory, to be taken awaye from them: So that the saying of S. Paul is fulfilled in them, wher
Roma. 1. he sayth: when they counted themselues wyse, they became fooles. For why? When they knew God, they glorified him not nor yet worshipped hym as god. For yf they woulde haue worshipped hym as God, they would not haue sought other maner wayes to worshyppe and serue him, than he hymselfe hath appoynted.

To be shorte the rewarde of thē, that wyll not submitte them selues to the euerlastyng worde of God, and serue hym after the phansyes of mens dreames, is to haue theyr foolysshe hartes blinded with vaie imaginations, and to be geuen vp into their owne lustes. Wherefore

The rewarde of mens phansyes and dreames,

I woulde counsel all men to beeware of them, and to say with that holy father S. Ambrose: Nos nouã omnia, que Christus non docuit iure dãnamus: quia fidelibus via Christus est. Si igitur Christus non docuit, quod docemus, etiam nos id detestabile iudicamus. We doe by a good ryght condemne all newe thynges, that Christe hath not taught: therfore if Christ hath not taught that, which we teache, we iudge it also to be detestable. And no merueill, for in an other place he sayeth playnly, that what soeuer hath not been set forth by ỹ Apostls, ỹ sãe is ful of wickednes

Ambrosius de virginibus. li. 4.

Idem in 1. Corin. 4.

And wyl ye bynde vs to be obedyente to that, which is detestable and wycked? Priest. I say stil, that subiectes ought not to busy themselues about Princes matters. For as ye heard already, if their lawes bee naughte and wycked, then

they their selues shall aunswere for it.

Prentise. In dede in thynges, that appertayne to ciuill lawes, constitutions and ordeynaunces, whyche magistrates be wonte too make for the preseruatyon of the commen weale, we oughte to laye asyde all busye and curyous questenyng.

For if their lawes be not accordyng to iustice and equite, or if by their wicked statuts their subiects be oppressed, they shall receaue acōdygne punishmēt at the righteous hand of God: yea the blood of thē, ẏ shal perysh through their vnrighteousse lawes, shalbe required at theyr handes.

And thys is the other kynde of ordeinaunces made by manne, wherunto, as I haue sayd before, we ought to be obedyent, and that wythoute any exceptyon, as farre

forth

forth as they be nothing repugnāt to godlyneſſe and Chriſtian charitye.

And wythout all peraduenture S. Peter ſpeaketh ther in the place afore alleaged of thys kynd of ordeynaunces.

Howbeit, if both the Greke and latyne be well weyed, we ſhal ſoone perceaue that Peter doeth here ſet forth the ſame ſelfe doctrine, which Paul himſelfe doeth teache in the 13. to the Romaynes: for the Greke wordes are theſe: hypotagete paſe anthropine ctiſei, and Eraſmus doeth tranſlate them after thys maner: Subditi eſtote cuiuis humane creature.

And in Englyſhe they may be tranſlated thus: be ſubiecte to all humayne creature, or to all menne. For although thys worde, ctiſis, may be taken for ordeynaunce: yet by the texte that foloweth, it appea

peareth it ought rather to be taken as Erasmus hath trāslated. Mark wel the circumstances of the texte youre selfe, and reade that, which foloweth immediatly after ỹ same sentence, that ye haue broughte in: and than, I trust, ye wyll confesse my saying to be true. Priest. What foloweth I praye you? For I perceue ỹ ye are a doctour. Prentise. I would be glad to be a disciple, master person, if I could fynde such a doctour, as would teache nothyng els but true Godlynesse.

The woordes that folowe are these: or rather that we maye vnderstand the whole matter the better, I wyl repete the whole sētēce: I meane both your texte, and that whych foloweth. Priest. Wel, do so. Prentyse. Submitte youre selfs vnto all maner ordynaunce of mā, or as Erasmus translateth, to all maner creature, for the Lords sake, whether

.Peter.2.

whether it be vnto the king, as vn to the chiefe heade, other vnto ru lers, as vnto them that are ſent of him for the puniſhment of euil do ers, but for the laude of them that doe wel.

Thys texte, I trow, is playne en ough, ſo that we nede no longer tarying abouke it. Prieſt. Saye ye what ye will, I will be of thys o= pinion as long as I lyue, that the ſubiectes ſhall bee excuſed beefore God, if they folowe and obey the lawes of ỹ higher powers, be they neuer ſo wicked and vngodly. Prē tyſe. And that mayſter perſon is a deuilyſhe and abominable opiniō. Subiectes Doeth not Chriſt ſay: if the blinde ſhal not be doe leade the blinde, they ſhall fall excuſed, if both into the dicher. He ſayeth not they folow that ỹ leader only or guide ſhal fal, wycked ſt but ỹ they ſhal both fal. And ỹ like vngodly reade we in ỹ prophete Hieremy, lawes. wher he ſaith, ỹ both ỹ fals prophet Math. 15.

and also they, that harkē vnto thē,
Hier. 14. shal perysh with swerde, with hūger, and wyth pestilence. Preyste. Doeth not the Prophete Ezechiel
Ezechi. 3. & 33. saye playnly, that the blood of the shepe shalbe requyred at the shepe heardes handes? Ye wyll not deny that the higher powers in the scriptures and also in prophane autors ar called Pastores populi, that is to say, the shepeheardes of the peopell.

Prentise. I graunt, that they be Pastores populi: that is to say, the shepeheardes of the people, and ✠ their shepes blood shalbe required at theyr handes.

But what shall thys be for the easemente of the poore shepe? The Prophete sayeth that they shall peryshe, and not only the shepeherds: whose damnacion in dede shall be the greater, because that they shall not onelye answere for their owne

sinnes

ſinnes, but alſo for the loſſe of thē, that were of God committed into their handes.

But, as I haue already ſayed, that ſhal bee but a ſmall helpe and comfort for them, when they their ſelues, beeynge in the euerlaſtynge paynes of hell, whereunto they ar brought through the neglygence & wicked lawes of their ſhepherds, ſhall ſee them to ſuffer greater punyſhment, than they dooe their ſelues.

I would fayne aſke you a queſtyon, maſter perſon. Prieſt. Aſke what ye wyll. Prentyſe. Is it lawfull for the inferior magyſtrates, to make lawes cōtrary to ẏ lawes of the higher power? Prieſte. No by S. Mary.

Prentyſe. What if the inferiour magiſtrates ſhoulde preſume to make any ſuche lawes? Prieſt. I woulde counte them no better thā

treators.

treatours. Prentis. And what wyl ye ſay of them, that know the high er powers lawes, and yet layinge them aſyde, folowe and obeye the lawes, ỹ the inferiour magiſtrats haue made?

As for an example: if the de= pute of Cales ſhould take preſump tuouſly vpon hym, to ſet forth ſta tutes contrarye to the Quenes lawes: what woulde ye iudge hym to be, and all them, that woulde o= beye hys ſtatutes and commaun= dementes?

Prieſte. I woulde iudge hym to be a treatoure, and all the o= ther to be as acceſſories vnto him.

Prentyſe. Ye know ryght wel ma ſter perſon, that they that be acceſ= ſoryes vnto any euill and wycked dede, as vnto treaſon, theſte, mur= ther and other lyke, doe receaue the ſame puniſhment, that the wycked

doers

doers are condemned to. Prieſte. No doubt therof.

Prentiſe. verye well, what ſaye ye nowe, is not the lyuing God, the father of oure Lorde Jeſu Chryſte, the hygheſte Monarche of all: And haue not all the kinges and Prynces of the earth their power and autorite from hym: Prieſte. Yeas truely. For the Pſalmiſt ſayeth not onely, that he is a greate God, but that he is a great kynge aboue all Goddes. Pſalm. 95.

And Sayncte Paule in the. 13. to ỹ Romaynes wryteth, that there is no power but of God, and that al the powers, that bee, are ordayned of God. Roma. 13.

Prentyſe. It reioyſeth my hearte to heare you ſpeake ſo wel: Is it lawfull then for the rulers, kynges and Prynces of the earth to make any ſtatutes, decrees,

and

and lawes contrarye to the com-
maundement of theyr high Mo-
narche and kyng, from whom they
haue and receaue all the autorytye
and power, that thei haue? Priest.
They ought in no wyse so to dooe:
for as Chrysste doeth bydde vs, to
pay that vnto Ceasar, which is due
Mat.22. vnto Ceasar: so doeth he cõmaũde
Mark.12 vs, to paye that vnto God, ẏ is due
Luke.20 vnto God. If God then wil haue
that to be payed vnto Cesar, that is
to say, to the ciuill magistrates, ru
lers and gouernours, that by hys
owne appoyntmente is due vnto
them: what an ingratitude and vn
thankfulnesse ſhould it be, if they
wold let men to pay that vnto god,
which is of al men due vnto hym?
I woulde verelye counte them no
lesse then ranke traitours? Prentis
And what is your iugement of thē,
that obeye theyr wicked lawes and
vnlawfull commaundementes?

Pryest

Priest. I must nedes confesse, that they are accessoryes vnto them, & consequently that they shalbe partakers of the same punishmente, that such wycked and vngodly rulers shall by the righteous iudgement of god receaue at length. Prē tyse. Thys, that ye say, master person, is most true, and therfore that holy man S. Bernarde, wryting to a certayne Moonke called Adam, sayeth these wordes: we oughte in no wyse to obeye them, that commaunde wycked thynges: for that were to breake the hygher obedyence, that is to say, the obedience ỹ we owe vnto God, for to obeye in ferioure and humayne creatures. What then? That thynge, whyche man commaundeth, God doth for bydde.

bernardus in epist. ad Adam monachū epi. x

And shal I geue eares vnto mā, beeyng defe to god? The Apostles did not so, but cryed out sayig: bet

ter

ter it is to obeye God then men. And by and by he concludeth: Ig-
Actes. 5. tur facere malum, quolibet etiam iubente, constat non esse obedientiam, sed potius inobedientiam. That is to say: therfore to doe euil at the commaundement of any mā it is playne and euident, that it is no obedience but rather disobedience.

Hieronymus in epi. ad Titum. cap. 1. Saincte Hierome wryteth on thys maner: if that, which the Emperoure or hys depute doeth commaunde, be good, obeye or folowe the wil of hym, that cōmaūdeth it: but if it be naught or wycked, and agaynste God, aunswere them out of the Actes of the Apostles: better it is to obeye God than menne.

Ambro. ad Marcellynam sororē de tradendis Basilicis. S. Ambrose sayeth playnlye, that thynges, whyche appertayne vnto God or vnto Gods seruyce, ar not in the Emperours power: meanig that kings and Emperours ought

to

to meddell no farther in thynges, that appertayne to Goddes true seruice, than he himselfe hath appoynted them in his holy & sacred worde.

And out of thys holy father, is there a most notable saying, reher ced in ỹ canon lawes on this wise: Julianus the Emperour, thoughe he was an Apostata, yet had he vnder hym Chrystyan souldyers: who, when he sayed to them, bring forth weapons for the defense of ỹ commen weale, wer most obediēt, but when he sayd vnto thē: bringe forth your armoure and weapons agaynst the Chrystyans, they then acknowledged the heauenly Emperoure. Que. 3. Can. Julianus.

But aboue all thynges, the golden sentences of Sainct Augustyne are to bee marked, where he wryteth

Auguſti. epiſt. 169.

wryteth thus. Emperours, when they theyr ſelues are in errour, doe for ỹ defenſe of their erroure make lawes agaynſt the trueth, whereby the righteous are both tryed and crowned: but not in doynge that, whyche they commaunde: for god forbyddeth it, as when Nabucho donoſor commaunded that the golden Jmage ſhoulde bee worſhipped.

They, that would not doe it, pleſed God highly, who forbyddeth ſuche thynges. But when Emperours are in the way of trueth, and make lawes for the trueth agaynſt erroure: whoſoeuer doeth cõtemne ſuch lawes, doeth purchaſe vnto hymſelfe great damnacion. And ad bonifacium comitem, de moderate cohercendis hereticis, theſe be hys wordes: whoſoeuer wil not obeye the Emperours lawes, which are made agaynſt the trueth of God, doeth

Augu. Bonifacio comiti de moderate coercendis hereticis.

doth purchase vnto himselfe a greate rewarde. And whosoeuer will not obeye the Emperours lawes, that ar made for the trueth, doeth purchase vnto hymselfe a great punissmente.

The lyke in a maner is alleaged out of this holye father in the canon lawes. Prayest. These autorytes, that ye haue brought, ar verye Godly. And in good fayth, I cannot but prayse you for your greate diligence, that ye haue vsed in readyng both the scriptures and auncyēt writers. Que. 3. ca. non seper.

But are ye able to brynge examples out of the scriptures of any of them, that woulde not obeye vnto godly statuts and lawes. Prentis. Ye as very many. Dani. 3. Sidrach Misach Abednago

Sidrach, Misach, and Abednago were in all thynges moste obedyent vnto kyng Nabuchodonosor, as longe as he commaunded

them no vngodlineſſe, in ſo much that for their true ſeruice and obedience, they were in hygh fauoure with the kynge: but after that Nabuchodonoſor began to doubte, and did ſette vp a golden Idolle, willing that honour too be geuen vnto it, that ought onelye ſ ſolely to be geuen vnto God, they wold in no wyſe be obediēt, but choſe rather to be caſt in to the burning fornace. With what ſtomack and boldeneſſe, when they were called before the kyng, aunſwered they? ſaying: Hoc notum ſit tibi, O Rex, quod Deos tuos non colimus, neque adorabimus aureum ſimulachrum, quod erexiſti.

That is to ſaye: Lette thys bee knowen vnto the, O Kynge, that we doo not worſhippe thy goddes, nor will worſhyppe thy golden Image, that thou haſte

Daniel. 6.

ſette

ſekte vp.

Daniel hym ſelfe, who was in greate fauoure with three kinges, that is too ſaye with Nabuchodonoſor, Elmerodache and Balthaſar, when a Lawe was made by the procurement of all ỹ Lordes of Perſie, that if anye man ſhoulde aſke any thynge by the ſpace of thyrty dayes, eyther of anye GOD or of anye man, but of kynge Darius onelye, he ſhoulde be caſten in to the denne of the Lyons, woulde in no wyſe obeye: but accordynge to hys wonte cuſtome prayed thryſe in the daye, hys chaumber wyndowes beinge wyde open, wherby he was diſcloſed and accuſed to the prince, and euen then denyed it not, thoughe he ſhoulde too the Lions for it. What nede I to reherce here ỹ moſte notable

example of Eleazarus that Godly olde ſcribe: When that cruel tirant Antiochus had made a very ſtraite law, that as many of the Jewes, as woulde not eate ſwines fleſh, ſhould be moſt cruelly putto deathe, this godly olde ſcribe would rather dye, than to breake Gods lawe.

2.Ma.7

And whē certayne of his frēds coūſeled him to feine himſelfe as he had eaten ſwynes fleſhe, promiſing him, that he ſhold by ỹ meane ſaue hys lyfe, he coulde not finde in hys heart to diſſemble, but offered himſelfe manfully to dye.

2.Ma.9.

What ſhoulde we ſpeake here of ỹ vii. yong men and of their mother? How many and ſundri waies were they tempted to breake the cōmaūdementes of god, now with cruell threatninges, now wyth fayre & flatteryng promyſes? And yet nothyng could make them to ſwarue one

one iotte frō the law of the liuinge god, but ſuffered al a moſte horri= ble and cruel death with their mo= ther. As for the example of the A= poſtles, it hath been alleaged alre= dye. Prieſt. Yf this doctryne ſhold be preached openly, it ſhould breed ſedicion and tumulte, and cauſe in ſurrection againſt the lawful ma giſtrates. Prentiſe. I knowe ẏ ma= nye honeſte men are ſlaundered to haue preached ſedicion and diſo= bedience, becauſe they haue taught how farre forth men ought to bee obedient to the ciuil magiſtrates: but al men of vpright iudgement, that haue heard them, can beare witnes to the contrary. For alwais in their ſermons they dyd moſt di ligently exhort the people to true o bediēce towards their magiſtrats putting before their eies the plags and vengeaunce of god, that hath at al times and in all ages happe=

The true preachers ar alwaies ſlaundered

ned to them, that haue rebelled a-
gaynſt their rulers & gouernors,
were they neuer ſoo wicked and
vngodly. Prieſt. Is not this a
kinde of rebellion, when they wil
not obeye their lawes and ſtatu-
tes? Prenty ſe. I haue alreadye
proued vnto you, that we oughte
in nowyſe to be obedient too wic-
ked and vngodlye ſtatutes or la-
wes. This, I ſay, haue I already
proued by playn textes of ỹ ſcrip
tures, by manifeſte examples of
theſame, & by manye notable au-
thorities of the auncïēt wryters.
Howebeit I will be of this opi-
nion, as longe as I lyue, that it
were better for a Chriſtian to dye
a thouſande deathes, than once
to drawe the ſwearde againſt his
lawfull magiſtrate. If God ſend
vs at any time ſuche magiſtrates
as be vngodly, lette vs remoue or
put away ỹ cauſes, wherfore god
did ſend them vnto vs: & then god

will eyther turne their harts, and make them such, as we wold haue them, or els if they be geuen ouer into their own lusts, take thē awai & place other in their roumes.

Priest. What be the causes, wherfore God doeth send vngodly magistrates vnto vs? Prētyse. Sine: for the scripture sayeth: Regnare facit hypocritam Deus propter peccata populi, ỹ is to saye: God causeth an hypocrite too reygne for the syns of the people. And in Esaie it is writtē on this māner: I shal geue you chyldren to be youre princes, saieth the Lord, & babes shal haue ỹ rule of you. And why? becauſe, saieth ỹ prophete, youre wordes & counseyll are agaynste the Lord, prouoking the presence of his maiestie vnto anger. Esaie. 3.

The surest weapons then, that we can haue, to fyghte withall, agaynst wicked and vngodly

rulers, is true repentaunce and amendement of lyfe, faythful and vnfeined prayer, proceadyng from a troubled and contrite heart. And they, that vse any other armure or weapons, are not of God, but are the children of Belial by suche vnlawfull meanes, as they doe vse, pourchassyng vnto themselues euerlastyng dampnatyon. Now master person, I trust ye haue sufficiently heard my mynde, touchynge the obedience that we owe vnto magistrates, and how farre forth we ar bound to obeie their lawes.

Rom. 13. Priest. But what meaneth Sainct Paul, when he saieth: wherfore ye must nedes obeye, not for feare of vengeaunce only, but also because of conscience.

Here are men bounde in conscience to obeye. What wyll ye haue more? Prentyse. The meanyng of Sayncte Paule is thys, that we

must obeye our temporall rulers, not onely for feare of the punishment and vengeaunce, that ensueth and foloweth of disobediēce, but also because oure conscience doeth beare vs recorde, that it is gods will and pleasure, that wee shoulde obeye them. That is too saye: Althoughe it were possible ẏ we might escape all worldely punishment and shame, that cometh of disobedience and rebellion, yet because in oure conscience we are by Gods worde perswaded, that all the hygh powers are of God, we can not (onelesse we wolde cōdemne our own selfs) but be obedient vnto them, as longe as thei kepe them selfes within the boūdes and limites of gods boke: for if they commaūde any thing, that God hath forbidden, or forbidde any thinge, that God hath cōmaūded: we ought to say with ẏ Apo-

Actes.5. ſtelles: Better it is to obeye God than men. Prieſte. And hath not God cōmaunded confeſſion? Prentyſe. No ſuche kinde of confeſſion doeth God cōmaunde, as is vſed now at this preſent. And truely I doe merueyll, that ye bee not aſhamed emōg you, to affirme that auricular confeſſiō is of god, or that it is grounded in goddes worde. Forthough it hath ben vſed in times paſſed, yet was it then free for all men, whether they wolde come to it or not. The hiſtories do playnlye declare, yea and many auncient writers beſydes, that ther was no law at all made concerninge this auriculare confeſſion, which ye do with tothe & nayle defend now, afore Innocētius the thyrde: and that it was a polityke order inſtituted by the biſſoppes, but not a lawe ordeyned

Auricular confeſſion is not of God.

ned either of Christe or of hys Apostles. Therfore Gratianus, after a long disputation, concludeth at lengthe the whole matter with these wordes: I haue briefli set fourth and declared, what autours, or what reasons and argumēts bothe sentences are grounded vpō: but we leaue to the iudgement of the reader, which of thē he will folowe and stycke to. De penitē tia distinc. I.

And he, that hath writtē the glose of the fyrst boke, doeth playnelye affirme, that we are onely bounde by mans lawe to this confession, and that therefore the Greckes were neuer bounde to it, because thys lawe was neuer receyued of them. Distinc. .5.

Whiche thing any man wolde haue iudged Diuelysshe and abominable, if thys confession hadde ben commaunded by Christe.

Gozo-

Trip li. 9. Sozomenus writeth, that this institution and ordeynaunce was diligently obserued and kepte in the weaste churches, and speciallye at Rome: wherbi he signifieth that it was not a generall law of all churches, and that one priest amōg al other was appointed to this office: wherin also he dooeth confute the lying opiniō of thē, which affirme that the keyes are deliuered vniuersally to al priestes forthis purpose: for it was not the office of all priestes too confesse, but one onely was appointed to it by the Bisshop. Priest. And was this cōfession vsed onelye in the Occidentalle or Weaste churches? This is a straunge thinge, that ye do tell. Prentyse. Thesame Sozomenus doeth also testifie, that it was vsed at Constantinople, vntill abominable whoredome and adultry was shamfully cōmitted betwene

betwene a Deacon & a noble wo-
man, vnder the pretence of it. For
this enorme and detestable cryme
dyd Nectarius, being a holy and
godly man, abolisshe auricular cō-
fession: whiche Nectarius was
then bisshop of Constantinople.
Now marke this thynge, mayster
Personne: if this had ben ỹ lawe
of God, Nectarius durste not
haue put it doune. Will ye accuse
this holy man (who of all men is
so much commended) of heresye?
Or will ye condemne the churche
of Constantinople, whiche neuer
after that tyme wouldē admitte &
receaue auricular confessiō? Yea,
not onely the church of Constan-
tinople, but also all the East chur-
ches haue ben alwayes at defiaūce
with this Antichristian traditiō.
Wold they haue ben against it, if
it had ben ỹ institutiō of Christes
Chrisostome, who was also bis-

bysop

Hop of that churche (I meane, of the church of Constātinople) doth so plainly testifye thesame in all his writings, & I merueyl, they be not asshamed once too opene theyr mouths to defende it. Tell furthe thy syns (sayeth he) & thou maiest put them awaye. If thou be asha-
Home. 2. in Psal. 51. med to tell to any man what thou hast done amysse, tell thy synnes euery daye in thy mynde. I bidde not the to telle them to thy felow seruaunt, who may bewraye the: but telle them to God, which healeth them. Telle furth thine offences vpon thy bedde, that there thy conscience may acknowledge and recognyse hir owne wickednesse.
Ser. de cō-fessione et penitentia. And in an other place: Now is it nothinge necessarie, sayeth thys holy father, to confesse oure selfs before witnesses, lette a diligent inquisition of thy sinnes be made in thy thought, this triall be done

without

without witneſſe: let God alone ſee thee, wherein thou doeſt confeſſe thy ſelf. And in hys 5. homelye de incomprehenſibli Dei natura contra Anameos, theſe be hys wordes: I do not bringe thee in to the ſcafold of thy felow ſeruaũtes. I do not compelle the to confeſſe, detecte or open thy ſynnes vnto men: repete thy conſcience before God, opẽ thy mynde, ſhew thy wondes vnto the Lorde, that moſt excellent Phiſition, and call for helpe at his handes: ſhewe thẽ to hym, that vpbrayeth nothing, but wil heale them moſt gentilly. Beſydes all theſe, he ſayeth in an other place: Beware thou tell not thy faute vnto man, leſt he do vpbrayede the, for we are not bound to cõfeſſe our ſelfs to our fellowe ſeruaunt, ẏ may vpbrayede ſt vtter abrode our cõfeſſion. But ſhewe thy woũdes to God, who is carefull

Ho. 5. de incompre. Dei natura contra Anameos.

Ho. 4. de Lazaro.

full ouer thee, who is gentill, & a sure Phisicion. Afterwardes he doth induce or bring in God, speaking on this mãner: I do not compelle thee to come furth in to ye cõmune scaffold, & to call for manye witnesses? Tell thy sinnes to me alone priuely, ye I may heale ye sores. Wil ye sai ye Chrisostome was so far out of ye wai, ye he wold haue set mens cõsciences at libertie, frõ comming to such kynd of cõfessiõ, if they hadde ben bounde to it by Goddes lawes? No no, mayster person, but he durst not require ye as a thynge necessary, whiche he knewe was not prescrybed & commaunded in Gods woorde.

Priest. But now wyl I proue, ye thys confession is commaunded of god. Prentyse I woulde be glad to heare, howe ye canne dooe it.

Math. 8. Pryest. Doeth not Chryst say vnto ye leper: goe, shew thy self vnto

the

the prieſt? Prentyſe. Why maſter perſon, did he ſende hym to ſhrifte? Luk. 7. 10. Mar. 1.

Who euer knewe that the prieſtes of the Leuiticall lawe wer appointed to ſhriue men? But nowe good maſter perſon, waigh wyth youre ſelfe, how well thys place ſerueth for your purpoſe. When dyd euer Chriſt ſend lepers to the prieſtes? afore or after they weere made clene? Prieſt. What queſtion is that? No doubte, he healed them afore he ſent them to the prieſtes. Prentyſe. Very wel, if ye wil then haue this place to ſerue for your purpoſe: it ſhoulde folow that we muſt be healed of our leproſye, ỹ is to ſaye, that we muſt haue clen remiſſion of our ſinnes afore we ſhoulde come to you. Wherefore then will ye haue vs too tell you our ſinnes, with all the circũſtãces that may be, perſwadinge the hym.

Mark how wel ỹ place alleaged by the prieſt ſerueth for ỹ purpoſe.

ſimple and ignorant people, that onles they tel you all their ſinnes one by one, ſt receaue abſolution at your hande, they ſhall neuer be forgeuen: Thys is altogether agaynſt your own lawes. For in ỹ booke de penitentia diſtinc. 1 Canon. Cum ergo. theſe wordes are founde: it doeth plainly appeare, that ſynne is forgeuen throughe the contrition of the heart, wythout ỹ cõfeſſiõ of ỹ mouth. And thẽ a litel after it folowreth: ſynne is not forgeuen in confeſſion: for it is manifeſtly proued that it is al ready forgeuen. Therfore confeſſyon is made for a declaracion of repentaunce, not for obtayninge of forgeuenes. And agaynſte the tellyng out of ſynnes after youre ſorte, one by one wyth the circumſtaunces and all, we haue theſe wordes of S. Auguſtine: what haue I to doe therfore wt men, ỹ they

De peni. Diſtin. 1. Cano. cum ergo.

Auguſt. li. 10 confeſſ. ca. 3

they ſhould heare my confeſſyōs, although thei wer able to heale al my diſeaſes & infirmites: Al curiouſe & buſye kynde of people to know an other mannes lyfe, but ſlouthful to correct their owne. And why ſeke they to heare of me what I am, that will not haue thee to heare, what they be: And when they heare me ſpeak of my ſelfe, howe can they tell, whether I ſay truth or not: For no mā knoweth what is in mā, but ỹ ſpirite of mā that is in him. It is alſo alleaged in ỹ decres out of S. Chriſoſtome, ỹ ſuch enumeratiō or telling out of ſynnes is nothyng neceſſary. Prieſt. Ye bryng many thynges, to draw me awaye from my purpoſe. But I wil not ſuffer you to eſcape. Thys was Moſes lawe, that the Prieſtes ſhoulde iudge of Leproſye: ſynne is ſpyrytuall Leproſye: ergo Prieſtes Leui. 13. 14. 15.

ought to geue sentence or iudge=
ment of it. Prētyse. If this place
doeth make you iudges of ye spiri=
tuall leprosye, why do ye not also
take vpon you the handelinge of
the naturall and carnall leprosye?
Is not this to play with the scrip
tures? The law hath put the tryal
of leprosye in to the priestes han=
des, let vs take thesame vpon vs.
Synne is spirituall leprosy, ther=
fore let vs also be the iudges and
tryers of synnes: But ye shall vn=
derstande, that the priesthode, be=
inge trāslated, the lawe also must
Hebru. 7. necessarely be translated. All the
whole priestehode is translated
vnto Christ, fulfilled and fynished
in hym: therfore to hym onely ap=
perteyneth the whole right & ho=
noure of the priesthoode. If ye
haue suche a delighte too folowe
Allegoryes, appoynte Christ too
be the onely priest, geuynge hym
the

the whole authoritie, and then cā we abyde your allegoryes. But we can not awaye with those allegories, that make of a mere politike lawe a ceremonie. Priestе. But why did God cōmaunde in the olde lawe, ỳ the priestes shuld haue the handeling & trial of the leprosye? Or why did Christ sēd the leapers, after they were cured and healed, vnto the priests, biddinge them to offer that, whiche Moyses commaunded for a witnesse vnto them? Prentyse. The holy Ghost willed the priestes of the olde testament to haue ỳ trial of leprosye, that when men shulde see the priestes of God to haue ỳ handeling of leprosye, they might by that sight, be admonished, that God looketh vpon oure infirmyties, and is carefull for them. Secondely, because the leuiticall priesthod was a shadowe & figure,

Why God wold haue ỳ pryest of the old law to haue the handlynge of the leprosye.

Not of these Popishe sacrificers, that most vntruly take vpon thē the names of Preestes, but of ỹ most pure and holy Preest, oure sauyoure Jesu Chryst: the holye goost by thys institution doeth certifie vs, that as the Leuiticall prieestes had not onelye the handlyng and tryall of Lepprosye, but also offered expiatorye sacrifices for it, so our sauiour Chryst alone knoweth truely our filthines, and seeyng it worthy of euerlastynge damnacion, hath taken vpon him to make satisfaction for it, that we beeyng throughly hym reconcyled to God, may obteine true clenelynes. Priest. But this ỹ Chryst dyd when he sent the lepers vnto the Prieestes, is in the newe testamēt. Therfore it can be no figure. Prēe tise. Jt was for two causes, that Chryst dyd sende the lepers to ỹ Prieestes. First ye shal vnderstād, that

Whi christ did send ỹ lepers to ỹ preestes.

that the Priestes beeyng vttet enemyes of Chryst, & of his most holy doctryne, dyd alwayes slā-der hys doynges, goyng about to perswade the people, that he did not woorke true miracles, but throughe legerdemayne deceaued them. If then the priestes sholde receaue agayne those lepers into the congregacyon of the cleane, those lepers I say, that Christ sēte vnto them, takyng at theyr hande the gyfte, whyche Moses com-maunded to be offered vnto them for their clensyng, that must haue been an other day a plain witnes agaynst them, if they shoulde goe aboute to calūniate Christes mi-racles. Secōdly Christ, because he woulde not seme to be a breaker of Moses lawe, whych was in ful strengthe vntil his death & passiō, dyd alwayes sende those lepers, that he dyd heale, to the same

Leuiticall Prieſtes, commaundyng them ſtrayghtly, to offer ỹ gyfte, whyche Moſes willed the to offer, that ſo he myght on euery ſyde ſtope their mouthes. Reade Chryſoſtome in the. 12. Homili de mulíere Can. What nede we too tary any longer about this mater: Doeth not the bleſſed Sainct Ambroſe in hys. 3. ſermon vpon the 119. Pſalme write on this maner: goe ſhew thy ſelf vnto the prieſt. What is thys true Prieſt (ſayeth he) but he, who is prieſt for euer: Prieſt. Yet can ye not denye that ſynne is ſignified by the leproſie. And that the lepers dyd repreſẽt ſynners.

Chri. Ho. 12. de muli Cana.
Am. ſer. 3. in. 119. pſa.

Prentyſe. Putte the caſe I graunte the ſame vnto you: what haue ye wonne by it: Euen that ſynners oughte to repayre to the miniſters of gods worde, there to learne by their wholſome prechig inſtruction

instruction and teachynge out of gods boke, how to repente truely and how to take holde throughe fayth vpon the mercye of God, beeynge offered vnto all true repentaunt synners in the gospell of our sauioure Jesu Chryste: but ye shall neuer be able to proue, ỹ they are bonde to tell oute theyr synnes vnto them, or to receaue suche beggerly absolutyō at their handes, as is nowe vsed in Antychristes churche.

Priest. What can ye say to this place of S. Mathewe: J wil geue the, sayth Chryst to Peter, ỹ ke̊yes of the ke̊yngdome of heauen, and whatsoeuer thou bindest in earth shall be bounde in heauen, & what soeuer thou loosest on earth, shal be loosed in heauen. And in the. 18 chap. of the same gospel, these be our sauiours wordes to all his Apostles. Verely J saye vnto you, Math. 16. Math. 18.

what

whatsoeuer ye bide on earth, shal be boũde in heauẽ. And whatsoeuer ye loose on earth, shalbe loosed in heauen. And also in the. 19. chap of Johns gospel, he sayeth: receaue ỹ holy gost. Whose soeuer
Joh. 19. synnes ye doe forgeue, they are forgeuen vnto thẽ. And whose soeuers synnes ye retayne, they are retayned.

The places doe sufficiently declare, that Preestes haue receued of Christ the autorite and power to forgeue synnes. Prentise. I wil first, master person, vnder youre correction and leaue, shewe what the scripture vnderstandeth by ỹ Keyes, and than shal any man easely perceaue and see, how shamfully these places haue hertofore beẽ wrasted and wrighed. The Keyes,
Chriso. in math. 23. Hom. 44. sayeth that worthy Chrysostome, are the worde of God and ỹ knowledge of the scriptures, whereby ỹ

gate

gate of trueth is opened vnto mē.
And the kepers of them are the
Prieſtes, to whom the offyce of
preachyng the woꝛde and expoū-
dyng the ſcriptures is commyt-
ted. Thys is to be called the keye,
wꝛyteth ſaynte Auguſtyne, wher
wythy the harde hartes are reſol-
ued to receaue fayth, the ſecretes Aug. Ser.
of the myndes opened, and what 27, de ſanc-
ſoeuer lurketh wythin, is by a rea tis.
ſonable way bꝛoughte to lyghte,
That, I ſay, is the true keye, that
openeth the conſcyence to true cō-
feſſyon of ſynne, and includeth oꝛ
ſhutteth in grace to the eternite of
an wholſome myſterie. To this a
greeth that holy father Ambꝛoſe,
ſaying: verbum dei. The woꝛde De peni. di
of God remytteth ſynnes, the 1. Can. Ver
Prieſt is the iudge in deede, the bum.
Prieſt doth his duety and office,
but he exerciſeth no maner po wer

nor

Liber. de cain et Abell.

noz iurisdiction. And in an other place these be hys wordes: Peccata per verbū dimittuntur. Sinnes are forgeuen by the worde, ꝙ interpreter wherof is the Leuite. Now is it playne and euydent enoughe, what we oughte to vnderstāde by the keyes: euen the true worde of God and the righte vnderstandynge of the scryptures: wherby the consceyences of true repentaunte synners are looſed and set at liberte from synne and euerlastyng damnacion, and ꝯ cōsciences of them, that be hardened in their wicked maliciousnes, and wyll in no wyse repente, boūd ẅ the dolefull chaynes of sinne, and of helly destruction. And ꝙ thys is the true meanynge and vnderstandyng of the keies Chryst him selfe doeth sufficientlye declare, when he sendeth his apostles abrode into the worlde, to preach ꝙ

gospel

goſpell, o penyng the miſterye of byndynge and looſynge on thys wyſe: goe ye throughoute all the wh ole worlde, and preache ỹ goſ: pel to all lyuyng creatures: here bee the keyes delyuered vnto thē: he, that beleueth and is baptyſed, ſhalbe ſaued: but he that beleueth not ſhalbe condemned. And in the 24 chap. of Luke, Chriſt ſayth on thys maner: thus it is wrytten, ſt thus it behoued Chryſt to ſuffer and to ryſe agayne from death ỹ thirde daye, and that repentaūce and remiſſion of ſynnes ſhoulde be preached in hys name amonge all nacions. Mark. 16. Luke. 24.

The woorde of God then, and the preachyng of the goſpell, are the keyes ỹ Chryſte doeth speake of. And when the faythfull miniſters of Gods woorde doe, by due mynyſtryng and preachyng of ỹ goſpel, certifie the repentaunt ſinners Whyst is to binde and louſe.

ners of the remiſſion and forge-
neneſſe of their ſynnes in ỹ bloud
of our ſauiour Jeſu Chriſt, they
louſe them, ſo that they are alſo
louſed in heauen: but when on ỹ
contrarie they do a certayne them
(becauſe of their vnrepentaunte
hartes) of the wrath and indigna-
tion of God, and of euerlaſtinge
damnation, excepte they forſake
their wicked wayes, and turne vn-
feynedly vnto the Lorde theyr
God, they binde them ſo, ỹ doubt-
leſſe they ar alſo bound in heauē.

And by thys byndyng and loo-
ſing Chriſt our ſauiour vnderſtā-
deth none other thyng, but remit-
ting and retaining of ſynnes.
And it is ſaied, that the miniſter
doth forgeue ſinnes, becauſe that
he, as a man myght ſaye, ſitting in
commiſſion vnder hys mayſter
Chryſt, doth out of hys mouthe
certifie ỹ cōſciences of true repen-

taunte

taūt ſinners of the free remiſſiō & forgeuenes of their ſinnes in t h blood of ẏ ſōe of god, apprehēded & takē hold vpō by faith. For to ſai ẏ mē cā forgeue ſines, it is a mere blaſphemy agaīſt god, which thig the very Phariſes & Scribs their ſels do teſtifie, ſaying: whi doth he ſpeake thẏſe blaſphemies? who cā forgeue ſynnes but god onely? Marke. 2.

Theſe Phariſes & Scribes ſhall riſe at ẏ day of iudgement, & condēne our Phariſaical hipocrites, ẏ ſo arragaūtly take vpō thē to forgeue mē their ſinnes. Prieſt. And haue we not power to forgeue other mē their ſinnes, but by ẏ way of cōmiſſiō? Prētyſe. No forſoth. And yet this cōmiſſiō muſt be duly executed accordyng to ẏ wyll & pleaſure of him, ẏ hath geuē it: els it wil be worthy nothig atal, thogh it hath neuer ſo glorious a face in ẏ ſite of ẏ world. Pri. I wil beleue

touchinge

touchynge thys matter, as the holy fathers haue beleued & taught afore vs. But they haue both beeleued and taught, that ỹ Pryestes haue power and authorite to forgeue synnes.

Therfore ye maye prate what ye lyst, as a sorte of newe fangled heades that ye bee, I wyll stycke to the olde catholyke churche, as long as I haue any breath in my bodye.

Prentyse. I wyll not haue you to take the matter so hotte, master person, but let vs rather wyth all lenite and gentylnes reason the matter together, that there maye come some edifying of it. I doubt not but that ye remember the sayeing of Cipryan full well, where he sayeth: and that Chryst oughte only to be heard, the father also dyd testifie from heauen, saying. This is my welbeloued sonne, in whō

I am

I am pleased, heare him. Wherefore, if Christ oughte to be heard onely, we must not regarde, what any man hath afore vs thoughte good to be done, but what Christ, who is afore all, dyd fyrst. For we ought in nowise to folow mās custome, but the trueth of God. And doeth not the Lord our god crye out in the prophete Ezechiell saying: Walke not in the statutes of your forfathers, kepe not their ordenaunces, and defyle not your selfes with their Idols: for I am the Lord your God. But walke in my statutes, kepe my lawes, & do them? Verely maister Person, the religion of oure forefathers shall not excuse vs. But what will ye saye, if I can proue by the sayinges and authorities of the most auncient fathers, that no man can forgeue synne but God only? Priest. Let me heare what ye cā

Ezech. 20.

God onely forgeueth synnes.

Cyrillus in Jo. 12. cap. 56.

saye. Prentyse. Cyrillus writing vpon Jhon, speaketh these woor-des: Truely it lyeth onely in the power of God to louse men from their synnes. For who can deliuer the transgressors of the law from synne, but onely the autour of the lawe? And by and by it foloweth in the same place: For when they (meaninge the Apostles & other ministers) forgeue and retayne synnes, it is not they that do it, but the holy Ghost that dwelleth in them, he it is that forgeueth & retayneth by them. Whereunto agreeth sainct Augustin, writing contra epistolam Petiliani. For, hauing touched this place of S. Jhons gospell: Receyue the holy Ghoste, whose synnes soeuer ye forgeue, thei shalbe forgeuen, and whose synnes soeuer ye retayne, thei shalbe retayned, he doth ende

Aug. cōtra epi. Peti. lib. 2. ca. 11.

the

the matter with these wordes: It is sufficientlye shewed, that they do it not, but that the holy Ghost doeth it by them. As it is sayed in an other place: for it is not you ỹ speake, but the holye Ghoste that is in you. In lyke maner Ambrose vpon the. 2. Corin. 12. wryteth on this manner: It is only in the power of God too remitte synnes & to geue the holye Ghoste. And agayne: He alone doeth forgeue synne, that alone dyed for oure synnes. Ambro. in 2. Cor. 12.

Lykewise Chrisostome vpon Matthewe: The seruitude and boundage of synne, sayeth he, is very greuous and heauye, frome the whiche no manne can deliuer but God onely. For no man besydes God hathe power to remitte or forgeue synne. Cyprian in hys sermones De lapsis saieth plainly thus: Chryso. in Matthēū ho. 5.

The Lord alone can ſhew mercy, and geue pardon of thoſe ſynnes: that are committed againſte hym, he alone can graunt forgeueneſſe of our ſynnes, that did beare our ſynnes, & ſorowed for vs, whome God did deliuer vp to deathe for our ſynnes. Is it not than a blaſphemy intollerable, and in nowiſe to be ſuffered in ỹ churcḥ of Chriſt that ſuche vyle perſons, that haue neither godlineſſe nor learninge, ſhoulde take vpon thē that thing, that apperteineth only to god? If it were onely for this, your confeſſion is to be abhorred of all true Chriſtian men.

Prieſte. Doeth not Chriſte ſaye theſe wordes: when ye ſtande to praye, forgeue, if ye haue aughte againſte any man? Agayne: if ye will not forgeue men their offences, my father that is in heauen ſhall not forgeue you. It appereth by

Mar. 11.

Math. 6.

by these textes, that men haue power to forgeue synnes. Prentyse.

Here doeth oure sauioure Jesu Christ speake of that mutual forgeuenesse of synnes and offences, that ought to be emōg Christiās, without the whiche we oughte to loke for no forgeuenesse at all of our own synnes at the handes of God. For as the wyse mā sayeth: He that seketh vengeaunce, shall fynde vengeaunce of the Lorde, whiche shall surely kepe hym hys synnes. Hereto maye be applyed all that whole parable, ỹ Christe doeth set fourth at large in the. 18. chapiter of Mathew. But it foloweth not, because wee maye forgeue oure Christian brethren the offences and trespasses, that they haue done against vs, that we can therfore forgeue those offences & synnes, that are cōmitted against God. Paieste. Is not this to geue Ecclē. 28. Math. 18.

power vnto the laye peopell too bynde and to louſe? Who can abyde this doctrine. Prentyſe.

Auguſt. de verb. domini. ſerm. 16

Theophilactus in Matth. 18.

Sainct Auguſtyn De verbis Domini geueth power vntoo the laye peopel to bynde and to louſe, and alſo Theophilactus, whoſe wooꝛdes be theſe. Verely I ſaye vntoo you: Whatſoeuer ye ſhall bynde vpon the earthe. If thou (ſayeth he) being offended, doeſt counte him, that hath wronged thee, as a Publican and Heathen, he ſhalbe ſuche a one in heauen: But if thou louſeſt him, that is to ſaye, if thou foꝛgeueſt hym, it ſhall alſo be foꝛgeuen hym in heauen. Foꝛ not onely thoſe thinges, that ỹ prieſts do louſe, are louſed, but whatſoeuer alſo wee, beinge wronged, do eyther louſe oꝛ bynde, is boũd oꝛ louſed. What ſaye ye to thys, maiſter perſonne?

Prieſte. Well. I will bringe

em

an other texte of the scripture, whiche I truste will stoppe your mouth. When Christe did rayse Lazarus frome deathe, did not he commaunde his disciples to louse and vnbynde hym? Joan. 11.

So when Christe hathe raised any synner frome the deathe of synne, who shal louse and vnbynd hym, but the priestes?

Prentyse. Fyrste I aunswere, that allegories are nothing worthy for the confirmatiō and establisshment of any doctrine. Secondely, where ye saye, that Christe commaunded his Apostles, too louse and vnbynde Lazarus, ye cā not proue it by the scriptures. For it is rather to be thoughte, that he willed the Jewes, that stode by, to doe it, lest they shoulde thinke, that there was anye feininge in the myracle, and that his power myghte the better bee knowen,

in this, that he did without touchinge, with his worde and voice onely, rayse the dead.

It is rather too be expounded after this manner: Christe, to take awaye all euell suspition from the Jewes, commaunded that they should fyrst take awaie the stone, that they should smel the stynche, haue sure tokens of hys death, see hym beinge raysed agayne, by the onelye power and vertue of hys worde, and touche or handle hym first, after he was reliued. But what if we should graũt that this was spoken vntoo the Apostles? What shoulde ye get by it? Priestе. That the Lorde hath geuen power to his Apostles, too louse. Prentyse. No, no mayster person, not so: for, if ye wil groũd your selfs vpon allegoryes (as ye can do none other here) this doctrine is rather to be gathered vpõ thys

thys hiſtorie: that Chriſt by thys facte wolde admoniſh vs, that we ſhoulde louſe theym, whome he had rayſed, that is to ſay, that we ſhould not beare in remembraũce thoſe ſynnes, that he hym ſelf had forgotten, or that we ſhoulde not condẽne them as ſyuners, whom he had quyted & aſſoyled: agayn, that wee ſhoulde not vpbraye the ſynnes, which he him ſelfe hadde forgeuen: or where he is merciful hym ſelf, and reddy too forgeue, we ſhoulde not be cruell, and bent to vengeaunce. Go now maiſter Perſonne, & make boaſte of your allegoryes. Prieſt. It was neuer mery with vs, ſythens ſuch ionge boyes preſumed to reade the ſcriptures. What ſay ye to this, ſeing, ye are ſuche a doctour? Did not thei, that came to the baptiſme of Jhon, cõfeſſe their ſynnes? Why ſhould not thei likewiſe, ẏ come to Math. 3.

receyue their housel, be shryuen? Prentyse. Ye muste marke, mayster Personne, that Jhon preached the baptisme of repentaũce, and did baptise with water vnto repentaunce. And therfore it is no merueylle, that they, whiche came to be baptised, acknowleged or confessed themselfs too be synners. For baptisme is a Sacramẽt or mysticall signe of forgeuenesse of synnes: whome then shoulde they receyue too it, but them, that acknowledge them selfs to be sinners? They therefore confessed theyr synnes, that they mighte be baptised.

But how or after what fasshiõ they cõfessed theyr synnes, where shall we learne better then in the thyrde Chapiter of the Gospell
Luc.3. of Luke? For after Jhon had made his dreadefull sermon: the people, being striken with a feare

of

of Gods righteouſe iudgemente, aſked hym, ſaying: What ſhall we do than? Likewiſe the Publicans and the Souldiours, that came to be baptiſed. Let anye indifferente manne reade the whole place throughoute. And as for your ſhryuinge afore the receyuinge of the Sacramente, wolde god, that godly order, which was ſet fourthe in kynge Edwardes dayes, whome we maye rightwel call the flour of all Chriſtendom, myghte hadde ben kepte and obſerued. For in many churches, that were godlye reformed, the Communicantes ſhould the night before bee called together before the miniſtre, there to receiue moſt godly inſtructions.

And if any contentiō, ſtryfe or hatred hadde ben betwene any perſonnes, there ſhoulde hadde ben honeſte agreemente made,

or

or euer they had come to the Lordes borde, all notorious and open ſynners beinge excluded from it. And what godly confeſſion were they wont to make together in the face of the whole churche, afore ỹ holy communion was miniſtred vnto them: No ſuche thinges are now vſed, but rather all is done contrarye to the order of the holy Ghoſte, withoute any ediſyinge. And this one onely thing ought to fraye all godly men & women, to be preſent at it. For who, being godly mynded, wolde ſeme w̄ his preſence to conſente & agree too ỹ breaking of that order, which the holy Ghoſte hath appointed and ordeyned to bee in the churche of God. But of this we will commone more at large, when ye ſhal be at better leaſure.

Prieſte. Well, I perceyue, that I muſte talke with you, concerninge

ninge this receyuinge of the Sa-
crament. But I haue busines
nowe: therfore differring that cō-
munication tyll an other tyme, I
will make an ende of this present
matter, that we haue in hande.
Are not these saincte James woor- James. 5.
des? Knowledge your fautes one
to an other.

Can ye denye, that the holye
Ghost doeth here bidde, ordeyne
and commaunde confession?
What are all the heretykes, in all
the whole worlde, able too saye a-
gaynste this manifest and playne
saying of this moste holy Apostel?
Prentyse. Ye shoulde haue
rehersed the whole texte. For he
did not onely saye: Confesse or
knowledge youre fautes one too
an other, but also, praye one for
an other.

Whereby it must nedes folow,
(seinge he commaundeth as well
mutuall

mutuall prayer, as mutuall confession) if we must confesse and knowledge our fautes onelye too the priestes, that we muste also praye for them onely. What an absurditie shoulde this bee? Moreouer it shoulde folowe of Iames wordes, that priestes only ought to confesse and knowledge theyr fautes one to an other. For, when Iames willeth vs too confesse or knowledge our fautes one too an other, he speaketh of such, as must heare one an others confession. For so soũdeth this Greke worde allelois, whiche is as muche too saye, as mutually or reciprocally.

But none, after the bisshope of Romes lawe, canne or maye heare one an others confession, oneleſſe they bee priestes after hys holye order: and thys can bee vnderstanded but of suche, as

oughte

ought too knowledge their fau-
tes one to an other, or heare the
confession one of an other.

Therefore this place serueth
nothinge for youre purpose. Let
vs rather seeke the true meaninge
of it, maister personne, that wee
maye haue profit thereby.

The true meaninge therefore
of this texte of saincte James is,
that we oughte to knowledge our
infirmities, weakenesses and fau-
tes one too an other, too the ende
we maye geue good, wholsome
and comfortable counsaill one too
an other: and knowynge in what
case or state we stande all, praye
one for an other moste earnestlye
vnto God for the helpe and assi-
staunce of hys holye spryte,
but mooste specially for the for-
geueneſſe of oure synnes.

Prieſte.

Prieste. I perceyue well enough, what marke ye shout at. Ye will haue no confessiō at all, that so y maye lyue styll after a carnall lybertie. Prentyse. As though that kynde of confession, that ye vse, coulde refrayne or kepe men from carnall libertie. Prïest. Men neuer lyued soo dissolutely, nor so wantonelye, as they haue done sence this holy confession haue bē put doune.

A false prayse of auriculare confession.

There is nowe no shamefastenesse in the worlde, honestye is clene gone, youth standeth in no awe. And why is thys? Because forsouth they are free from the yoke of holy shrifte. All the yeare longe, when they remembred, that they muste come vnder B ENEDICITE, they were affrayed to do any thyng amisse; but when it was gone once, so that

so ẏ they wer deliuered frō al fear of cōfessiō, they did set al at sixe & seuen, not passyng how they dyd lyue. For they knewe, that they shold be called to no reckenyngs. Wherfore any man may easely se, whi ye be so great an enemy to the wholsome ordeynaunce & cōstitution of the church. Prētise. Wher as ye laye to my charge, ẏ I will haue no cōfessiō, ye shamfully slāder me. For I haue alwayes alowed ẏ kynde of confessyon, that god hath commaunded vs in hys holy scripture: but ẏ beggerly cōfession, that ye haue inuented of your own braynes, without gods holy worde, to bryng all mens cōsciences vnder your gyrdels, I do vtterly detest & abhorre. And it is so farre of, ẏ mē should by it lerne to feare god, that rather by it the feare of God is dryuen and clene chassed away out of their hearts.

What mischiefe auricular confession doth

For when the rude & ſimple are once perſwaded, that if thei be ōce in the yere ſhriuen of the Prieſte, thei ſhal haue cleane remiſſion of their ſynnes and receaue (if atleſt they wilbe ſtil ẏ childzen of your whozyſhe mother Antichzyſtes church) ful abſolution both a pena et culpa: what care they howe they lyue al the yeare long? It is enough, thinke they, if a litell beefore Eaſter they cōe to ſir John lacke latin, and tel him a tale in the eare of an houre long: and ẏ they may eſcape the better chepe, loke whō they knowe to be moſt fooliſh & moſt vnlearned emōg the rabblement of prieſtes, him wil thei chooſe for their goſtly father. For why? they haue been made to beleue, ẏ al the ſinnes, ẏ thei confeſſe themſelues of vnto ẏ prieſte, are quite & clene forgeuē, & put out of remembzaunce before god, euē as

ſoone

soone as they haue tolde them to their gostly father. As for repentaunce & the due fruetes thereof, it is not vnknowen, how wel and how substātially ye hādel ẏ matter emonge you. For whereas ye should sende them to Christ, who is ẏ only phisicion of ẏ soules, & exhort thē to such workes, as God hath prepared for vs to walke in: ye most vngodly send thē to dead creatures, prescribing vnto them not ẏ workes cōmaūded of God, but superstitious works of youre own inuētion, making thē an hondreth fold more ẏ children of hel, thā they were afore they came to you. I doe here lette passe how ẏ ye make it a matter of such necessite, that by your own doctryne no mā can wythout it obteyne saluacyon: yea sōe now adayes ar not ashamed to make it equall w̄ baptisme & the supper, which ar sacra

Auricular confession is made a snare to snarle men wyth all.

mentes instituted and ordeyned of Chryst himselfe. Besids al this is it not made a snare, to snarle mē withal? For the first questiō almost that ỹ priest vseth to aske them, ỹ now at this present come to shrift, is: whether they beleue not, that ỹ body of Chryst is in the sacramēt of the aultare, flesshe, bloode, and bones, as he was borne of ỹ virgin Mary: if they once saye nay, not only they shal not haue absolucion, but also they shall straighte waies be complained of & accused to ỹ bisshop, & so put in ieopardye to lose both body & goods. What honestye & goodnes ye be wont to teach fayre maidēs, & mēs wiues when ye haue thē behynde a cloth vnder benedicite, I wil not here now at this present rehearce: leste I should offend honest and shamfast eares. But although I am ashamed to tel it (the thynge is so vilaynous

vilainous & so filthy) yet are ye not ashamed to doe it. As for that ye alleadge, that youre confessyō kepeth youth vnder awe, and that seruauntes wer neuer in awe, sēs it was takē away: ỹ same is plaīe false: for it is rather a meane and a way to make thē to stande in no awe at al of their parentes nor of their masters and mistres, seyng they be perswaded, that whatsoeuer they doe, if they be once shryuen of it vnto the Priest, it shalbe cleane forgeuen vnto thē: so that if they stande in any awe, it shall be of sir John, & not of thē that they should stande in awe of. But if, puttyng aside such beggerlye inuencyons of men, ye woulde diligentlye oute of Gods boke teache youth their duetye towards their elders, towardes their parentes, towardes their masters and mystres, not once or twyse in ỹ yeare

The waye to dryue ỹ feare of God into ỹ youth.

but euery fourthnighte, puttynge before their eyes the fierse venge aunce of god, that hangeth ouer ỹ heades of all disobedient children and of al vntrue dealig seruaũts, and that there is no way to purchase the fauoure ꝛ blessynge of God, except they will repente, ꝛ takyng holde through fayth vpon our sauiour Jesu Chryst, walk vpryghtly in their vocatyon, beeyng sure that god seeth both their doinges and also the verye secrete thoughtes of theyr heartes: then would they in dede stande in that true awe, that God wyl haue thē to stande in, fearing him, not w̄ mens doctrynes ꝛ preceptes, but wyth the true feare, that he commaundeth in his worde. Preyste. By S. Mary, I wil speake to my lord byshop, that ye may come into the pulpit and make a sermon to the people. I pray you master

Math. 15. Esay. 29

doctoure

doctour of the newe learnyng, tel me, what the same confessyon is, that God hath commaunded. Pre tyse. I canne well inoughe abyde your mockes master person, saye on me what ye wyl. In the meane whiles I wil not let to tel ỹ truth. First and formest there is a confession, that God wil haue too bee done vnto hym, wherein we doe daylye and hourely confesse oure synnes vnto hym, accusynge and condemnyng our selues before hi as vnrighteous and myserable synners, that oure synnes maye throughe his mercye, whyche we faythfully craue for, be forgeuen vnto vs.

The confessyon that we ar boũd to make to God.

And of thys confessyon doeth Dauid speake, when he sayth: I wyll knowledge my synne vnto the, & mine vnrighteousnes haue I not hid. I sayed, I wyl confes my synnes vnto the lord, and so ỹ forgauest me ỹ wickednes of my

Psal. 32.

ſynne. And in the. 51. pſalme theſe
Pſal. 51. be his wordes: haue mercy vpon me, O God, after thy great goodnes: accordynge to the multitude of thy mercyes, doe awaye myne offences. I knowledge my faulte and my ſynne is alway before me. Daniel in the 9. chap. of his prophecy maketh thys confeſſyon vn
Dani. 9 to god: O Lord, ỹ great and fearful God, we haue ſinned, we haue offended, we haue been diſobedient & gone backe, yea we haue departed frō al thy precepts & iudgementes. And John ỹ Euāgeliſte
1. Joh. 1. wryteth thus: if we knowledge our ſynnes, God is faythfull and iuſt, to forgeue vs our ſynnes, & to clenſe vs frō all vnryghteouſnes. Thys confeſſion ſayth Saint Auguſtine, writig ad Julianū comite, whych is done vnto God,
Augu. ad Julianū comitem. is required by Gods law: wherof ſayth ye Sainct John ſpeaketh

ſayig: if we knowledge our ſines
ſt c. for wythoute it ſynne cannot
be forgeuen. And of thys doeth
ſpryng the cõfeſſion and acknow=
ledging of the greate and vnſpea=
kable mercy of God. For excepte
we doe truely from the botome of
our hearts recogniſe and acknow
ledge our miſerye ſt wyckednes,
we ſhal neuer truly confeſſe ſt ſet
forth, prayſe and extoll, enhaũce ſt
magnifie the great mercy of god,
and vnſpeakable goodnes of our
ſauiour Jeſu Chryſt oure Lorde,
declared to vs warde. And herof
it doth come, that they that haue a
true feling of their own miſery, ſt
of their ſinnefull ſt corrupted na=
ture, hauing on the other ſide be
fore their eyes ỹ exceading great
bounteouſnes of their heauenlye
father: are alwayes ready to con=
feſſe openly their ſynnes in the
great congregacyon. As whẽ Da=

uyd

uid was rebuked of Nathan, he
then, beyng pryckedin his consey=
2.Regu.2. ence, dyd say: Peccaui domino, I
haue synned vnto thee lord. As if
he should saye: I dooe not excuse
my self, nor I refuse not to be cō
ted of al men a synner, or to haue
that to be publisshed abroade a=
mong men, whych I woulde had
to bē hydden affore. And for thys
Leui.16. cause god dyd in tymes passed or
deyne emong the Israelites, that
the people should openly in ỹ tē=
ple confesse theyr synnes. For god
did foresee this to be a very neces
sary meane, wherby they should
be broughte into the true knowe=
ledge of themselues. And it is also
most conuenient, that by acknow
ledging our misery we should sett
forth the goodnes and mercye of
God emong vs, and publysshe it
openly before al ỹ woald. O how
Godly was this dōe in king Ed=
wardes

wards tyme: whensoeuer the peo
ple of god gathered themselues
together, to offer their spirituall
sacrifices, and to make their com=
mon prayers vnto him. S. Augu=
stine de vera et falsa penitentia
cap. 11 maketh mencyon of an opē
or publike confession, whyche he
defineth after thys maner. Opē
or publike confession is, wherby
in tymes passed they, that were
dead in open synnes, declared thē
selues to be dead, publishing open
ly theyr death, & shewyng opēly ꝯ
fruites of repētaūce, ꝯ the people
myght bewayle him ꝯ was lost.
Thys was in dede the wont and
custom of the old aūcient church,
when any man had cōmytted any
notorious cryme or fault, that he
should be excōmunicated and put
out of the cōgregacion, til he had
earnestly repented & in tokē ther=
of cōfessed his synne openly in ꝯ

Augusti. de vera & falsa peni=tentia. ca. 11

face

face of ỹ whole churche. But thys wholsome kynde of confessyō is cleane abolysshed, & in steade ther of an apysshe momerye crepte into the churche. S. Paul semeth to speake of it, in the 1. Cor. 5. & in the 2. Cor. 2. Priest. Is this al that ye can saye? Haue ye no more stuffe in your bogette? Prentise. I haue yet somewhat more to say. For ye shall vnderstande, that the scryp= ture doeth beside al this alow. 2. kyndes of priuate confession. The one we vse for our own sake, when we beeyng troubled in cōs= cyence, doe open our griefe vnto our neighbour, to ỹ ende he maye helpe & coumfort vs, wt some godly & wholsome counsel. And as touchyng thys kynde of cōfessiō, though by gods worde we haue liberte to open our conscyence & to shewe oure griefe to any of our Christen brethren, whō we thinke

Two kides of priuate confession alowed in the worde of god.

to

to be able to coũſel & cõfort vs: ſo if ẏ paſtours or ſhepeheardes bee me of godlynes & learning, and of a pure & ſounde iudgemente, we ought moſt ſpecially in ẏ troubls & angours of the conſcience to reſort or flye vnto thẽ, that accordig to their office, they may in time miniſter ẏ cõfortable ſalfe of gods word vnto our woũded cõſcieces. For they are ordeyned & inſtituted of God for the ſame purpoſe: therfore ought we moſt chyefelye to come vnto thẽ, that ſo we may enioye thoſe ſpiritual benefytes, that God of his mere mercy and goodnes doeth daylye offer vnto vs by thẽ. But what maner of paſtours are they, that ye wyl haue vs now a dayes to come to: mẽ w̃ out al godlynes, w̃out learnyng in iudgement, men geuen to al kinde of ſuperſtition and Idolatry, mẽ, of whõ ye can learne nothing els, but

The Paſtors and ſhepeherds of Antichryſtes churche.

but to blaſpheme God and hys worde, yea men that are ready, in ſtede of geuing good and wholſome counſell, to cut all mennes thrates, that will not conſent and agree to their abominacion & ſtinkyng blaſphemyes. Gregorye, as we haue in the decrees, did ordeie that a Prieſt ſhould in no wyſe, neyther by ſigne nor token, vtter y confeſſion of any man: but theſe your bloud ſuckers haue a good ſport, by vtteryng mens confeſſion, to put them in ieopardye to loſe both bodye and goods. How largely, when they ſyt bybbynge vpon their ale benches, they talke of thoſe thynges, that they haue heard vnder benedicite, it is to ſhamful to tel. The fathers of the weſt churche would neuer confes their ſynnes vnto them, of whom they coulde not be taughte nor inſtructed to godlynes; but ye wyll haue

Gregorye. De peni. di ſti. 6. Canō Sacerdos.

haue vs to confesse our selues to them, that haue no more learnyng than dull headed asses. Oh that those holy Canons mought take place, which wil vs to shūne those goostly fathers 'that are blyndonly and ignoraunte of gods way: in so muche that they appoynte, that we shold rather confesse our selues to our neyghbour, beeyng a lay man, than vnto that Priest, that wanteth both learnynge and iudgemente. The other kynde of confession is, that we make for our neighbours sake, to reconcyle hym vnto vs, if we haue offēded hym in any maner of thynge. Of thys kynde of confessyon dooeth our sauyour Jesus Chryst speake when he sayth: if, whē ỹ offerest thy gyfte at the aultar, ỹ doest remember, ỹ thi brother hath aught agaīst the: leuether thy gift, & goe thy way, be first recōciled to thy brother Math. 5.

brother, & then come, & offer thy gift. This reneweth loue & nourisheth charite, if we doe humbly acknowledge our fautes to whō we haue offended for pardon: of this confession sayeth Cyprian: Thei doe penaunce tyll a due tyme, and afterwardes come to cōfession, & then the bisshop & the clergy do restore vnto thē ȳ right of ȳ cōmunio. But of thys enough. Priest. Ye & to much to, to se so much diuinite in a Prentyse. Prētyse. Ye haue heard my cōscience of ȳ obedience to magistrates, Auricular cōfessiō, & of ȳ confession ȳ god requireth. Priest. Sith it wilbe nōe other wise, tel me, wil ye receaue ȳ sacramēt? Prentyse. Master person I haue now other busynes to doe. Priest. Well, wel, I shall handell you well enoughe.

¶ Answere ye Pope catholykes.